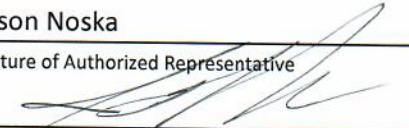


# BROADBAND EXPANSION GRANT APPLICATION

## For Fiscal Year 2022

<p>Primary Applicant (Name and Address):</p> <p><b>Union Telephone Company</b>  <b>PO Box 100</b>  <b>100 W North St</b>  <b>Plainfield, WI 54966</b></p>	<p>Applications MUST be UPLOADED to ERF via the Commission's website, <a href="http://psc.wi.gov/apps35/ERF_upload/content/my_menu.aspx">http://psc.wi.gov/apps35/ERF_upload/content/my_menu.aspx</a>. Refer to section 2.3 for detailed instructions.</p> <p>Applications are due and MUST be uploaded to ERF no later than: <b>March 17, 2022</b> at 4:00pm (16:00) Central Time. <b>Late applications will not be accepted.</b></p>	
	<p>Contact for further information:  <a href="mailto:PSCstatebroadbandoffice@wisconsin.gov">PSCstatebroadbandoffice@wisconsin.gov</a></p>	
	<p>Date:          March 14, 2022</p>	
<p>The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin is seeking applications for Broadband Expansion Grants. The Commission may award one or more grants during Fiscal Year 2022 to public and private entities that meet the eligibility requirements set forth in Wis. Stat. § 196.504. This grant round will be funded with bond proceeds authorized by the Wisconsin Building Commission pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 13.48(30). As such, successful applicants are subject to the requirements of Wis. Stat. § 13.48(30). Successful applicants will demonstrate a clear and achievable plan to improve broadband communications services in one or more underserved areas in the State.</p>		
<p><b>Applicant Certification:</b> In signing this application, the undersigned verifies under penalty of perjury that the Applicant and its employees and agents have not, either directly or indirectly, entered into any agreement or participated in any collusion or otherwise taken any action in restraint of free competition with respect to this application; that no attempt has been made to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit an application; that this application has been independently arrived at without collusion with any other proposer, competitor or potential competitor; that this application has not been knowingly disclosed prior to the opening of applications to any other applicant or competitor; that all of the responses and representations of Applicant in this application are true and correct to the best of the undersigned's knowledge, information, and belief; and that Applicant agrees to, accepts, and will comply with all of the terms and conditions respecting this application and any award of a broadband expansion grant as may be established in a grant award Agreement.</p>		
<p>Name of Authorized Representative (Type or Print)</p> <p>Jason Noska</p>	<p>Title</p> <p>Operations Manager</p>	<p>Phone</p> <p>715-335-6301</p>
<p>Signature of Authorized Representative</p> 	<p>Date</p> <p>3/17/2022</p>	

## SUMMARY OF FY2022 GRANT APPLICATION

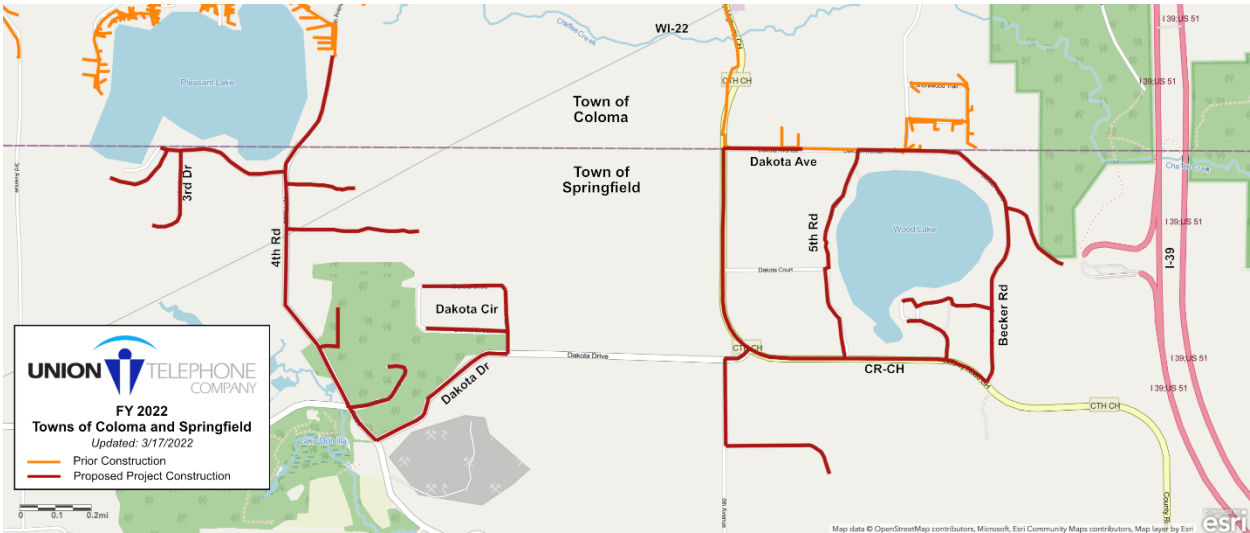
Primary Applicant Name <b>Union Telephone Company</b>	Amount of Broadband Grant Request (round to nearest dollar) <b>\$ 405,366</b>
Federal Employer Identification No. <b>39-0669620</b>	Amount of Matching Funds Pledged (round to nearest dollar) <b>\$ 495,448</b>
Contact Name and Title <b>Jason Noska, Operations Manager</b>	Total Cost of Proposed Project (round to nearest dollar) <b>\$ 900,814</b>
Telephone Number <b>(715) 335-6301</b>	Project Name <b>Pleasant/Wood Lake Fiber</b>
E-mail Address(es) <a href="mailto:jnoska@uniontel.net">jnoska@uniontel.net</a>	Type of Proposed Broadband Service (FTTH, Cable, DSL, etc.) <b>Fiber to the Home and Business</b>
Grant Manager, if different than Primary Applicant	Grant Manager Federal Employer Identification No.
Grant Manager Contact Name	Grant Manager Email Address and Telephone Number
If the application proposes a public-private partnership, list the names, addresses, and FEINs of the partner companies or organizations <b>Town of Springfield, W7754 Dyke Dr. Westfield WI 53964 FEIN 39-1346840</b> <b>Town of Coloma, N2161 Cty Rf FF, Coloma WI 54930 FEIN 39-032462</b>	
Brief Project Description <b>Joined in Public-Private Partnerships with the Town of Springfield and the Town of Coloma, Union Telephone seeks a FY2022 Broadband Expansion Grant to provide Fiber to the Home (FTTH) broadband to an under-served area of 269 homes and businesses in the Towns of Springfield and Coloma</b>	
Maximum Proposed Download Transmission Speed <b>FTTH: 1 Gbps and faster</b>	Maximum Proposed Upload Transmission Speed <b>FTTH: 1 Gbps and faster</b>
Minimum Proposed Download Speed Available To Purchase <b>FTTH: 70 Mbps</b>	Minimum Proposed Upload Transmission Speed Available To Purchase <b>FTTH: 10 Mbps</b>
County or Counties served by this project <b>Marquette and Waushara Counties</b>	Community or Communities served by this project <b>Towns of Springfield and Coloma</b>
List of the broadband service providers, if any, currently serving the area the applicant proposes to serve <b>Frontier Communications, Bug Tussel, US Cellular, AT&amp;T Mobility, Verizon Wireless</b>	

Does proposed project serve an <u>unserved</u> area of the State, as defined in <u>Section 1.4</u> of the application instruction? (yes/no)  NO	Is the Applicant certified as a Broadband Forward! Community or Telecommuter Forward! Community, or does the grant project propose to serve a Broadband Forward! Community or Telecommuter Forward! Community? (yes/no)  NO
For last mile projects or component the expected number of Business Locations that will have access to the improved broadband service (i.e., total business locations passed or with new service access). 4	For last mile projects or components the expected number of Residential Locations that will have access to the improved broadband service (i.e., total residential locations passed or with new service access). 265
Of the improved business locations, how many locations are <i>unserved</i> ?  0	Of the improved residential locations, how many are <i>unserved</i> ?  0
For providers that are eligible telecommunications carriers will the proposed broadband service be available to Lifeline customers? (yes/no)  YES	Are there any programs available for low-income households to access low-cost service or discounts? (yes/no)  YES
Is the internet service provider currently participating in the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program? (yes/no) NO	Is the internet service provider currently participating in the Department of Public Instruction and CESA purchasing's Digital Learning Bridge? (yes/no) NO
Did the internet service provider participate in the Public Service Commission's voluntary Broadband Coverage Data Collection in 2012? (yes/no) YES	


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Map of the Proposed Service Area



**Summary of Project Budget and Funding Statement – Cost Categories –**

FY22 Broadband Expansion Grant Application Budget & Income Summary					
Please complete this form using Microsoft Excel. A PDF copy must be attached to your application as page four. In addition, this form must also be uploaded to ERF in Excel format.					
<b>Grant Summary</b>					
Grant Applicant:			Project:		
Union Telephone Company			Wood/Pleasant Lake Fiber		
<b>Budget</b>					
Line:	Description / Category:	Grant Funds:	Match:	Total:	
1	Contractual, Consultant Fees	\$ 379,626.00	\$ 463,988.00	\$ 843,614.00	
2	Equipment	\$ 15,165.00	\$ 18,535.00	\$ 33,700.00	
3	Supplies			\$ -	
4	Labor (Salary, Fringe)	\$ 2,340.00	\$ 2,860.00	\$ 5,200.00	
5	Permitting, Licensing Fees	\$ 10,575.00	\$ 12,925.00	\$ 23,500.00	
6	Travel			\$ -	
7	Other			\$ -	
Total:		\$ 407,706.00	\$ 498,308.00	\$ 906,014.00	
55.0% match requested					
<b>Pledged Contributions</b>					
#:	Entity:	Entity Type:	Pledge Type:	Pledge:	
1	Union Telephone Company	Applicant	Cash	\$ 498,308.00	
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
Total:				\$ 498,308.00	

### **Executive Summary of this Application**

**Union Telephone Company, in Public-Private Partnerships with the Towns of Springfield and Coloma, seeks a FY2022- Broadband Expansion Grant in the amount of \$405,366 to provide Fiber to the Home (FTTH) broadband to an under-served area of 269 homes and businesses in the Towns of Springfield and Coloma. The total cost of construction for this project is estimated at \$900,814, to which the applicants will provide a matching contribution of \$495,448, or 55% of funding.**

Over the years, Union Telephone has received numerous phone calls and letters from residents in the proposed area asking us to come into their area and offer them our High-Speed Broadband. Every person we talked to stated that there is no option for them to get good, reliable High-Speed Broadband in their area. To demonstrate the amount of need for these services, Union Telephone surveyed the targeted area and received overwhelming a response from residents who strongly desired our plans to bring fiber-based broadband services to their neighborhoods. The PSC Broadband Map shows both wireline and wireless providers claiming to provide the state minimum Broadband requirements or higher. However, it is the belief of Union Telephone that the data provided in that map does not accurately represent the speeds available. In our surveys we were unsuccessful in finding a single resident that was able to obtain the speeds claimed by either a wireline or a wireless provider on the PSC Broadband Map. Both of the Town Chairman's have reiterated this finding

Springfield Town Chairman Terry Janke and Coloma Town Chairman Mark Kerschner have been working with Union Telephone company to remedy years of insufficient broadband speeds available in their communities. With the demand for our FTTH broadband services being so high, we feel it is imperative to push ahead with this expansion project. Based off those requests and many conversations with the Town Chairmans, Union Telephone is respectively re-submitting this grant application.

Completion of this project will bring new opportunities for Advanced E-Learning, Telehealth, business commerce and jobs, and opportunities to Telecommute - all of which enhance the economy and overall quality of life for the residents in the Towns of Springfield, Coloma, and surrounding area.

At completion of this project, Union Telephone Company will offer the following internet rates at what communities see as very reasonable initial rates:

- 70 Mbps Download / 10 Mbps Upload \$44.95 per month
- 100 Mbps Download / 20 Mbps Upload \$69.95 per month
- 200 Mbps Download / 50 Mbps Upload \$89.95 per month
- 100 Mbps Download / 100 Mbps Upload \$149.95 per month
- 250 Mbps Download / 250 Mbps Upload \$199.95 per month
- Faster speeds up to 1 Gbps will be initially available, ICB.

Having the expertise to carry out this project and the necessary matching contribution, Union Telephone along with the Towns of Springfield and Coloma are seeking the additional funding necessary through the Wisconsin Broadband Expansion Grant Program to



successfully construct the infrastructure for these underserved/unserved portions of the Town of Springfield/Coloma.

## **Mandatory Application Requirements**

### **3.2.1 Applicant identification and contact information**

Name of Entity: Union Telephone Company  
Mailing Address: PO Box 96, Plainfield WI 54966  
Telephone Number: 715-335-6301  
Contact: Jason Noska, Operations Manager [inoska@uniontel.net](mailto:inoska@uniontel.net)

This application proposes public-private partnerships between the Town of Springfield and Union Telephone Company. Copies of those agreements appear in Attachment A of this application.

Public Partner : Town of Springfield  
Mailing Address: W7754 Dyke Dr, Westfield WI 53964  
Represented by: Terry Janke, Town Chairperson  
Phone: 608-296-2096

Public Partner : Town of Coloma  
Mailing Address: N2161 County Road FF WI 54930  
Represented by: Mark Kerschner, Town Chairperson  
Phone: 715-228-3144

- a. **Requirement.** The application must show that the applicant is an organization, a telecommunications utility, or a city, village, town, or county that has established a legal partnership or joint venture arrangement with an otherwise qualified organization or telecommunications utility, and as such meets the eligibility requirements set forth in Wis. Stat. § 196.504(1).

Union Telephone Company is an Incumbent Local Exchange Carrier certified to provide telecommunications service in the State of Wisconsin pursuant to Section 196.50(2)(b) of the Wisconsin State Statute.

Union Telephone Company (PSCW Utility # **6000**) provides service to the Plainfield, Bancroft, Almond, Hancock, and Coloma exchanges (Study Area Code **330962**).



Union Telephone Company along with the Towns of Springfield and Coloma propose to construct a fiber-to-the-home (FTTH) network that will reach a total of 269 locations in the Towns of Springfield and Coloma along the northern and southern borders respectively.

This area of central Wisconsin is underserved according to the Wisconsin Broadband map as of mid-November 2020, and according to the many local residents who sought us out. All of those stating that current wired service is inadequate and unreliable. Due to the hilly terrain, dense vegetation, and heavy tree cover in the proposed area, fixed wireless, satellite, and mobile wireless coverage is poor at best. Therefore wireless options are not adequate and reliable enough for the current broadband demands of streaming for work and school. Residents told us of the need for fiber-based internet to improve their quality of life. This project does so for the residents and businesses within the proposed 1.59 square mile project area having 13.3 road miles.

Union Telephone Company will construct fiber optic facilities as an extension of its existing fiber network currently serving the Village of Coloma into the northern edge of the proposed area. The network will be served from the Coloma Central Office that is adequately powered with both battery back-up as well as a standby generator. This new network would be monitored by our Network Operations System 24x7x365.

The network design will consist of fiber cables ranging from 24 strands to 96 strands depending on location requirements. With our many years of experience constructing and deploying FTTH networks, our network design is expected to be adequate to serve this rural serving area and handle future growth.

Service drops and the electronics necessary to provide the FTTH services will be supplied to residential and business locations as requested. Our current construction process allows for mainline fiber to be constructed during the prime season of April through November. Fiber drops buried to the homes prior to winter freeze up will be provided for installation throughout the winter months. This allows for the maximum construction and installation process to bring subscribers on-line throughout the entire year.

Maps attached in Exhibit B show the proposed construction and area of proposed expansion.

Several census blocks at the edges of the proposed areas include locations currently served by Union's FTTH services. None of these fiber-fed locations located within these comparatively large census blocks are part of this application. The Wisconsin Broadband map lists some of the proposed area as "served" but Union believes the entire proposed area is either "unserved" or "underserved" according to our surveys/research. Union's most recent review of the Wisconsin Broadband map has led us to believe the map data is inaccurate. If it is subsequently found that any location along our proposed path does not fit this description, the company would gladly and quickly remove any locations from its construction budget.

A ESRI Geodatabase compressed as a zip file named

FY2022\_UnionTelephoneCompany\_WoodPleasantLake

that includes a proposed fiber path file has been provided to the State Broadband Office. It contains the area and census blocks that comprise this project.

A visual map in **Exhibit B** shares the areas supported within the ESRI file.

The proposed project will increase broadband access in southern Waushara County and northern Marquette County which Frontier Communications serves as the incumbent. Union believes the proposed service area counts as “unserved” and “underserved” in this grant funding round, having some broadband available, and therefore below the 5/6 Mbps threshold set by the PSCW. There is currently very little-known landline broadband service available in portions of the proposed area.

Fixed wireless broadband services are said to be available in the proposed area, but Union has been informed by local residents and the Town Chairman’s that is not accurate. This project will provide a facilities-based fiber optic technology solution that will remain superior to wireless and copper-based plant currently serving within this area. Our proposed fiber-based broadband will remain functional for decades longer than current wireless options.

The Fiber Broadband service will provide speeds capable up to 1/1 Gbps and faster as demand for such services arise. There are currently 269 residential and businesses that are impacted through this Broadband expansion.

Fiber-based broadband will drive significant growth in the Towns of Coloma and Springfield. These rural areas are directly affected by dense foliage, heavy tree coverage, and hilly terrain that greatly impedes wireless signals.

Fiber broadband will raise the selling price of residential and business real estate in the area. People in areas like these regularly ask Union when and where we will deploy fiber broadband before they make a decision to purchase land to build a house. We have also received calls from realtors asking about fiber broadband access because they don’t want to take the listing if there isn’t superior broadband access there.

The deployment of this FTTH network will provide increased broadband access to the entire unserved/underserved population of 269 locations, which currently has “no” or “very little” other known facilities-based option.

The proposed project includes backbone and last mile fiber facilities.

No middle mile infrastructure or its costs are included or necessary to meet deployment objectives of this grant application.

Union Telephone Company currently maintains sufficient middle mile and backhaul facilities and capacity on its existing backbone ring network to deliver all proposed and future last mile subscribers in the area, and subject to all current state and federal regulations.

Union Telephone Company will provide its broadband service exclusively using a FTTH network. This fiber network is a like-engineered extension of the company’s existing FTTH fiber network, currently in place and used in Coloma’s regulated service territory. The same technologies will be used to provide the highest quality of service to all new customers served as a result of this application.

All broadband electronics used to provide broadband services will be managed to the same standards as those in Union’s regulated service territory.

Union Telephone Company plans to offer broadband services at these prices to residential subscribers in the area:

- 70 Mbps Download / 10 Mbps Upload \$44.95 per month
- 100 Mbps Download / 20 Mbps Upload \$69.95 per month
- 200 Mbps Download / 50 Mbps Upload \$89.95 per month
- 100 Mbps Download / 100 Mbps Upload \$149.95 per month
- 250 Mbps Download / 250 Mbps Upload \$199.95 per month
- Faster speeds up to 1 Gbps will be initially available, ICB.

Much faster speeds for the unique needs of businesses are available at competitive rates. Union also offers optional voice and digital television services to all new customers.

Union Telephone Company will use the following deployment schedule, based on similar projects it has completed:

- March/April 2022 Finalize Engineering
- May-June 2022 Order necessary materials and supplies
- July-November 2022 Bury new backbone and distribution fiber
- August-November 2022 Bury drop fiber to premises
- November 2022-April 2023 Begin installation of electronics and drops
- April 2023 Resume burying new fiber drops and installation of electronics

**Exhibit C – Construction Costs** – summarizes construction costs for the fiber network.

**Exhibit C – Construction Costs** provides a summary of the construction costs for fiber network. Engineering, some construction and some installation will be performed by Union Telephone Company employees and long-term third-party contractors under contract and under supervisory control of Union Telephone Company.

All networks will be owned and managed by Union Telephone Company.

The grant funds requested in this Application will only be used for authorized purposes.

The applicant will not subsidize its ongoing expenses or the monthly bills of telecommunications customers. It is understood that for purposes of this grant program, subsidy means a contribution to the recurring service charges, operating costs, including profit, of the telecommunications provider.

Union agrees to demonstrate that all grant funds requested in this Application have been used for the sole purpose of constructing broadband infrastructure in the unserved/underserved areas described in this Application. Union will self-fund its contribution to this project's construction costs.

See **Exhibit C** for a summary of construction costs.

**Matching contributions will be at least 55% of total construction costs of \$900,814. Union Telephone Company will contribute \$495,448 in the form of construction costs and directly attributable salary costs.**

Matching funds are accounted for in Exhibit D.

This application includes a public-private partnerships between the Town of Coloma, Town of Springfield, and Union Telephone Company. These agreements were established in 2020 when Union 1<sup>st</sup> applied for this Grant. Through constant communications, both of these agreements are still in place. The Towns have and continue to be a constructive voice with neighboring towns. The Town of Coloma and Springfield continues to:

- Provide in-kind assistance to the Project which may be in the form of waived fees and expenses for obtaining permits or permissions required from local government;
- Grant permission on and across Town property to engage in activities to construct the Project in compliance with all existing rules and regulations;
- Provide administrative support and resources as may be agreed upon, in support of the Project;
- Provide community education and outreach regarding the expansion of broadband access to residences and businesses within the scope of the Project

Based off Union Telephone Company research and survey data we believe the proposed project does not duplicate existing broadband infrastructure at the PSC's defined 25/3 Mbps speed. Neither Union nor subscribers in the proposed grant area are aware of any plans of incumbents to provide additional infrastructure in the area.

Frontier Communications is the only landline service provider in the proposed grant area. In both the Town of Springfield and Coloma, they offer a combination of DSL ranging from max speeds of 6/1 Mbps to 115/7 Mbps. Again, Union Telephone has not found a resident in the area that is able to obtain those advertised speeds. Every resident we spoke with stated that those speeds are not available to them or they're "available" but never obtainable. Bug Tussel Wireless listed speeds available ranging from 60/8 Mbps to 2/1 Mbps. As described above, Union believes the terrain of the proposed area impedes all wireless signals to the point of making them unstable and incapable of supporting the broadband needs of its residents and businesses. Heavy tree cover, dense vegetation, and hilly terrain cause these wireless signals to be inadequate. United States Cellular Corp is listed at 2/.064 Mbps.

We are unable to estimate the percentage of customers within the proposed footprint that are served at these advertised download/upload speeds, in part because so many of them have either said that's not the case, or have sent us letters.

Mobile wireless broadband service providers include AT&T, US Cellular and Verizon Wireless— advertising the availability of 4G/LTE services in the area. , but the speed and quality of their internet connectivity cannot be guaranteed at distances from the Interstate Highway 39 corridor. We have preformed testing of cellular service in the area and the below maps shows the results.



The company recently surveyed subscribers on their current and future needs as a way to gauge the impact of this project

- A majority of respondents described “definitely” needing fiber-based broadband services, preferring higher speeds when available.
- Important dialing needs included video streaming, the ability to do homework at home, and connection of smart-home devices.
- Ongoing social media connectivity capable of moving pictures and video
- The ability to work at home when employers provide the option.

The 269 current households/businesses are South & Southwest of the City of Coloma. Residents know the area is not suburban, but truly rural, currently with very low population density and without recent telecommunications infrastructure investments to the area.

The proposed footprint is an unserved/underserved area within Marquette and Waushara County and in great need of broadband services. Many of the residents who live in these two townships have their children or they themselves may attend the same schools (i.e. Elementary, High School, University or Technical College) with the same homework assignments needing the same broadband services to complete assigned work as students in the more populous parts of the Counties. The impact of high-speed internet for these students will allow them to complete their assignments at home without having to travel

into town to use a Wi-Fi hotspot or the public library which is especially important with today's gas prices.

Likewise, at home workers will enjoy the benefits of choosing to live in these communities because of its robust FTTH network. Currently, many residents working at home have expressed great concern for the lack of broadband services which inhibit their ability to compete for jobs. Many tell us they need the higher upload speeds for Zoom Meetings, as well as school at home and Telemedicine visits. This FTTH project will allow them to do so and compete on an even playing field with their urban counterparts. Union offers a wide range of packages with speeds ranging from 70/10 Mbps to 250/250 Mbps and will be adjusted based upon demand.

In addition, a low-income option will be available to those residents who qualify for the program. The base speed of 70/10 Mbps will be offered to these recipients.

Union Telephone has had many residents and farmers express their concerns about the lack of, and, the desire of more modern and advanced broadband options. Real-estate agents have also contacted Union Telephone regarding broadband offerings claiming that they have a much harder time selling homes that lack quality broadband.

Completion of this project will bring the technological tools desperately needed to allow the residents to advance themselves, and the farmers to effectively compete in the global market. In addition, the local real estate market would benefit from the added service quality. The greatest impact of High-Speed broadband services is something that not only will benefit the individual quality of life but the community as a whole.

Primary benefits of this project include:

1. Delivering the area's only fiber-to-the-home (FTTH), schools and business high speed broadband service. The applicant's provision of up to gigabit and faster connectivity will give residents world class access to education, healthcare, Work at Home applications and video services, not available before. Businesses coming to these communities will now be on an equal footing with their urban counterparts, attracting capital and workers not now in the area. It is expected that new housing and jobs will be stimulated by the existence of fiber-based broadband services.

High speed broadband service will allow many residents to work at home as employers allow. This broadband project will provide the facility-based infrastructure to expand to new housing developments.

Vacant lots will now be prime locations with the new high-speed broadband. Realtors will have an enhanced selling attribute to the prospect buyer now that fiber optic broadband services are available. Employment and the local tax base will increase as a result.

Access to emergency services. High-speed fiber-based broadband services enable rural practitioners in the Northern Health Centers to transmit medical imagery and data to clinics and healthcare providers in larger population centers. Along with access to broadband, this is cited as an important concern of visitors and seasonal residents—apart from the value it confers to permanent residents and small businesses in the area.

Home WIFI networks will expand the range of cellular phones and provide connectivity in homes choosing not to use landline telephone services.

The personal impacts of this project can be seen in the letters of support recently received and appearing in Exhibit E of this application.

The current application is an example of the scalable nature of Union's ability to expand its architecture and marketing reach into new, unserved/underserved rural areas adjacent to its own rural service areas. This project, if completed, provides Union Telephone Company with ubiquitous FTTH availability in the Towns of Springfield and Coloma and frees up remaining rural high-cost support for other areas it can now afford to complete.

Materials, methods, systems, and network elements used in the present project are the same as those used within Union's regulated service area. This provides a significant cost savings that allows the company opportunities for low-cost expansion and service customer needs through the same approaches and personal care it has shown in service areas it has grown since 1900.

These same skills prove valuable as Union looks to the next expansion, beyond this project. Neighbors just beyond the construction area of the present project have already begun calling and sending the company letters in anticipation of a next phase application. Union's network design provides for scalable expansion. Scalable expansion and improvement include these aspects:

- Union will match FCC and PSCW guidelines for increases the speed of, or latency requirements of, its broadband services.
- Full availability of Union's IPTV video service on day one.
- New services will also be available to customers such as alarm and security services and managed Wi-Fi. Union will not require broadband subscribers to simultaneously take a TDM voice product in order to receive broadband and video services.

Our proposed project in the Towns of Springfield and Coloma will attract new residents and businesses. They will relocate to areas having fiber broadband, as it expands the opportunity for in-home businesses to flourish with the use of the Internet. Brick and mortar businesses will be attracted to the area because the population base has the ability to grow through attracting new activity in the area. Family farms can become competitive with the use of technology. School, restaurants, shopping centers, and local economies can show signs of improvement when Fiber Broadband is brought to rural Wisconsin. People can choose to stay in rural Wisconsin and not have to move into the urban areas.

The proposed footprint is mainly rural. However, there is many lake/vacation homes, which will see the property value increase. Also, being on both sides of the I39 corridor, this allows future developers to consider building subdivisions. Both will increase the Township's tax base and increase opportunities for local economies to flourish.

We are already hearing from other areas within these Townships looking for us to expand into their areas. All of this expansion is brought on by increased telecommunications bridging the digital divide to rural Wisconsin, allowing residents the option to choose rural and not give up the amenities of urban living.

Fiber Broadband that is proposed in the Town of Springfield and the Town of Coloma will open up a new era that will allow for the unlimited possibilities for future growth and expansion. It's a win for the Townships and a win for the state of Wisconsin.



In addition to the needs of telecommuting for work or school, during this time of COVID, many Town/Civic meeting are now being held virtually for simple convenience. This is becoming the norm. Fiber High Speed Broadband can help provide members of the community who are attending civic meetings to participate from home allowing for them to effectively carry out their roles within the community.

People in this area who do need reliable high-speed internet to work from home, complete schoolwork, run their business better, stay involved in community activities, and engage in all manner of correspondence and commerce have contacted providers and others in hopes of gaining access to unlimited service delivering the speed and reliability that they need. These needs have been ignored.

A grant in the Springfield/Coloma area would advance employment and income by simply raising the quality of instruction in their local schools. This Broadband project is an important step toward closing this gap.

This need is measurable to Union in that it has generated interest from prospective subscribers and civic leaders. It has generated public-private partnerships that intends for Union to use this as the first step to overbuild these communities. There are additional lots available in the project area and the Town supervisors are asking for broadband infrastructure to maintain and raise property values as homeowners are actively choosing places to live that allow work at home, homework at home, and reasonably priced alternatives to the rising price of satellite TV.

The proposed project area is at the northcentral portion of Frontier's Westfield exchange. As incumbent, Frontier does not maintain fiber nodes in the proposed project areas. Services to these areas, according to residents, are without broadband. The result is that, in fact, fiber expansion into this area will not impact the incumbent's ability to serve areas adjacent to the proposed project areas

Union Telephone Company has a long history serving the people of the bordering areas of both Pleasant and Wood Lake. Union Telephone Company was first incorporated March 8<sup>th</sup>, 1900; the Almond Telephone Company on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1900; and the Coloma Telephone Company on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 1906. The three companies were merged under the name of Union Telephone Company in June 1980, and now serve the Villages of Almond, Bancroft, Coloma, Hancock, Plainfield and the surrounding rural areas. Their main office is in Plainfield.

Alton H Bowden became Manager of the Almond Telephone Company in May 1906. In 1917, he bought control of the Union Telephone Company of Hancock and Plainfield and became Manager in 1919. In 1926, he bought control of the Coloma Telephone Company. In 1939, the first automatic switchboard in Waushara County was installed in Hancock. The first dial equipment in Portage County was installed in Almond in 1948. The Coloma Telephone Company was cutover to automatic equipment in 1956. The Plainfield exchange served as a toll center until its conversion in 1965. In 1982, REA financing was obtained to upgrade service.

All exchanges in the Company were converted to digital service and all were housed in new buildings. In 1999, Union Telephone Company was the 2<sup>nd</sup> (only to NASA) in the country to install and cut over Siemens RSU's, AKA "Smart Remotes" in Almond, Hancock, and Coloma. Union Telephone started out in the new world of internet by offering dial-up services.

On January 1<sup>st</sup> 2022, Union Telephone was acquired by Amherst Communications. This acquisition adds many years of experience and expertise in designing and building FTTH networks. Amherst Communications has been building these networks for 14 years with great success and Union has the full support of Amherst in this proposed project.

With the advancement of technologies, they started into the broadband world by offering DSL. As the demand for more bandwidth increased, the transition to fiber to the home starting in 2008 when Union Telephone placed FTTH in the Village of Almond. They have since converted to fiber in all 5 of their villages and are currently working on finishing the upgrades in their rural markets.

Union Telephone has seen many changes in the almost 120 years of being in business. They have and will continue to help lead the way into the technological future. The success of our business relies upon foresight, flexibility, and execution of a business plan. Union Telephone Company has shown for the past 120+ years it has and will be up to the challenge.

Union Telephone has been installing Fiber to The Home (FTTH) since 2008. Before entering into the ACAMII program all of our FTTH project were self-funded. Those projects were engineered, constructed, and installed in the same manner as today. Union Telephone has proven its ability to successfully complete projects in a timely and effective manner.

This application does not duplicate existing broadband infrastructure. Due to the inaccurate data on the Wisconsin Broadband Map, this area shows mostly as served. However, Union Telephone research and testimonials from homeowners and Township leaders proves that data is not correct. Union believes most of these areas are “underserved” or “unserved” for the purpose of this grant program.

The area proposed in this application does not currently have a fiber communications infrastructure and is unlikely to see it under any reasonable scenario in the coming five years. There is fixed wireless internet infrastructure listed on the Wisconsin Broadband map as being capable of providing up to 60/8 Mbps speeds, however, with aging copper plant, hilly terrain, dense vegetation, and thick tree coverage there is no way to feasibly provide the advertised services. With that said, there is no comparison of the service quality/speed of fiber versus aging copper plant, or distant fixed wireless equipment that would count as a duplication of infrastructure.

Union Telephone Company has been in business since the year 1900, serving the needs of its local communities. It is financially stable and has filed its Annual Reports and now Annual Questionnaires with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin. Union Telephone Company continues to be a financially sound company as is evident with the continued fiber optic cable expansion. Union has successfully completed broadband expansion to rural areas through a FY2019 Broadband Expansion Grant which was constructed and fully put into service the following year. Union, a company with a strong financial and operational history looks to continue expanding broadband to rural Central Wisconsin by working with local communities who see the value of working with a reliable partner.

In any sparsely populated area, the introduction of fiber infrastructure enables much faster and more reliable access to healthcare services and providers. Remote diagnostic medicine

and health maintenance services from pediatric to geriatric purposes become possible with simple laptop cameras and attached devices that are becoming commonly available. The costs of travel and ultimately health insurance can quickly decline just due to the availability of high-speed broadband services.

Telemedicine provides rural residents in Central Wisconsin with basic monitoring and testing from the privacy of their homes, when supported by High-Speed Fiber Broadband as proposed within this application. Specifically, in the winter months where driving 5-7 miles on winter roads can be hazardous, telemedicine from home will help keep the elderly safe and at home while maintaining their health and improving their quality of life.

These Towns lack local healthcare service and providers. This project, if completed will help to alleviate that problem.

High speed broadband access for the purposes of research and completing homework *at home* become possibilities if this application is accepted. As schools depend more and more on interactive distant learning and Internet access in real-time, especially in this time of COVID, the availability of high-speed broadband to students and those seeking vocational training will now be unencumbered by connection speed.

We currently work with various School Districts in providing Broadband services for low-income students. These programs have been tailored to each School Districts needs with the best outcome of providing students the ability to access their classrooms with quality broadband services.

The Towns of Springfield and Coloma will provide in-kind assistance to the Project in the form of waived fees and expenses for obtaining permits or permissions required from local government.

The Towns of Springfield and Coloma's Public Private Partnership with Union Telephone provides for ongoing planning and working together to reach all prospective subscribers in the proposed project area with educational materials of options available, including the availability of Lifeline discounts of qualifying products.

These examples may not be in the form of dollars and cents, but in the building of commitment and motivation to educate; both Townships and Union are working for a common goal for the community; a shared purpose of improving broadband infrastructure to the area.

Union has received letters of support from state and local government officials, many phone calls and in person conversations with residents who would like to work at home, those running businesses at home, farmers, and students wanting to do homework at home. These letters are listed in Exhibit E with key aspects on how this Broadband Grant will enhance the quality of life in the Towns of Springfield and Coloma.

This application has at its disposal the full engineering, operations, and systems strength of Union Telephone Company along with Amherst Communications. That includes access to equipment and labor markets, consultants, and capital markets.

This applications also benefits from the availability of Town Board members, who have worked with Union to develop better broadband infrastructure plans that target the needs and priorities of county residents and employers.

Exhibit A

## Public-Private Partnership

Public-Private Partnership Agreement

Attachment A

Page 1 of 3

# Public-Private Partnership Agreement

By and between Union Telephone Company (Union)

And Town of Springfield (Springfield)

THIS AGREEMENT (the "Agreement") is made this 24<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2020 by and among the Participating Parties (defined below) located in the State of Wisconsin (the "State") which, through their duly authorized representatives, have signed this Agreement.

WHEREAS, the Town of Springfield, wishes to help provide access to resources and the support structure necessary for economic development in the Town, and

WHEREAS, Union Telephone Company, a Wisconsin corporation, proposes to expand broadband capability to reach the most potential un-served or under-served residences and businesses in Marquette County, and in particular within the Town of Springfield, where such service is currently unavailable or is prohibitively expensive and specifically herein (the "Project"); and

WHEREAS, it is currently expected that the proposed broadband expansion would be constructed in the Town of Springfield, Wisconsin (each unit of local government a prospective "Participating Party", and collectively, the "Participating Parties"); and

WHEREAS, to further support its application for a Broadband Expansion Grant, Union has requested that the Town of Springfield enter into an Agreement, referred to as a Public Private Partnership Agreement, to assist in the Project by:

Page 2 of 3

- Providing in-kind assistance to the Project which may be in the form of waived fees and expenses for obtaining permits or permissions required from Marquette County government;
- Granting permission on and across Town property to engage in activities to construct the Project in compliance with all existing rules and regulations,
- 
- Providing community education and outreach regarding the expansion of broadband access to residences and businesses within the scope of the Project; and,
- Recognizing that the Broadband Expansion Project is a priority and is consistent with any internal planning documents adopted by the Town's governing committees.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby agreed by and among the Participating Parties as follows:

2. Effective Date. This Agreement shall become effective upon its adoption by all Participating Parties. Any initial Participating Party, or additional Party entering into this Agreement shall adopt within 90 days an authorizing resolution and provide a certified copy of the resolution to all other Participating Parties. This Agreement shall remain in full force and effect until terminated as provided herein.
3. New Members. After the effective date of this Agreement, additional municipalities may join in this agreement.
4. Termination. This Agreement shall be deemed terminated by any party upon thirty (30) days written notice requesting termination of this agreement in whole or in part.
5. Severability. The terms of this Agreement are severable and any determination by any court or agency having jurisdiction over the subject matter of this Agreement that results in the invalidity of any part shall not affect the remainder of the Agreement.
6. Amendments. The terms of this Agreement shall not be amended without the written authorization of the governing bodies of all Participating Parties.

Page 3 of 3

7. Governing Law. This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Wisconsin.
8. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in two or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD,

WISCONSIN, a Participating Party

BY: Terry Janku Chairman

Print: Terry Janku

Date: 11/27/2020

Acknowledged: uN1öN TELEPHONE COMPANY



Print: J4sazV n/a-5Kd

Date: 11/27/2020

Exhibit A

## Public-Private Partnership

Public-Private Partnership Agreement

Attachment A

Page 1 of 3

# Public-Private Partnership Agreement

By and between Union Telephone Company (Union)

And Town of Coloma (Coloma)

THIS AGREEMENT (the "Agreement") is made this 24<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2020 by and among the Participating Parties (defined below) located in the State of Wisconsin (the "State") which, through their duly authorized representatives, have signed this Agreement.



WHEREAS, the Town of Coloma, wishes to help provide access to resources and the support structure necessary for economic development in the Town, and

WHEREAS, Union Telephone Company, a Wisconsin corporation, proposes to expand broadband capability to reach the most potential un-served or under-served residences and businesses in Waushara County, and in particular within the Town of Coloma, where such service is currently unavailable or is prohibitively expensive and specifically herein (the "Project"); and

WHEREAS, it is currently expected that the proposed broadband expansion

WHEREAS, to further support its application for a Broadband Expansion Grant, Union has requested that the Town of Coloma enter into an Agreement, referred to as a Public Private Partnership Agreement, to assist in the Project by:

Page 2 of 3

- Providing in-kind assistance to the Project which may be in the form of waived fees and expenses for obtaining permits or permissions required from Waushara County government;
- Granting permission on and across Town property to engage in activities to construct the Project in compliance with all existing rules and regulations,
- Providing administrative support and resources as may be agreed upon, in support of the Project;

•

- Recognizing that the Broadband Expansion Project is a priority and is consistent with any internal planning documents adopted by the Town's governing committees.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is hereby agreed by and among the Participating Parties as follows:

1. Records. The Town of Coloma will maintain and be the custodian of all records associated with the administering and performance of this Agreement and will make the records available to all Participating Parties upon request.
2. Effective Date. This Agreement shall become effective upon its adoption by all Participating Parties. Any initial Participating Party, or additional Party entering into this Agreement shall adopt within 90 days an authorizing resolution and provide a certified copy of the resolution to all other Participating Parties. This Agreement shall remain in full force and effect until terminated as provided herein.
3. New Members. After the effective date of this Agreement, additional municipalities may join in this agreement.
4. Termination. This Agreement shall be deemed terminated by any party upon thirty (30) days written notice requesting termination of this agreement in whole or in part.
5. Severability. The terms of this Agreement are severable and any determination by any court or agency having jurisdiction over the subject matter of this Agreement that results in the invalidity of any part shall not affect the remainder of the Agreement.
6. Amendments. The terms of this Agreement shall not be amended without the written authorization of the governing bodies of all Participating Parties.

Page 3 of 3

7. Governing Law. This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Wisconsin.

8. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in two or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument.

**TOWN OF COLOMA,  
WISCONSIN, a Participating Party**

By: 

Print: MARK Keschner

Date: 11/30/2020

**Acknowledged: UNION TELEPHONE COMPANY**



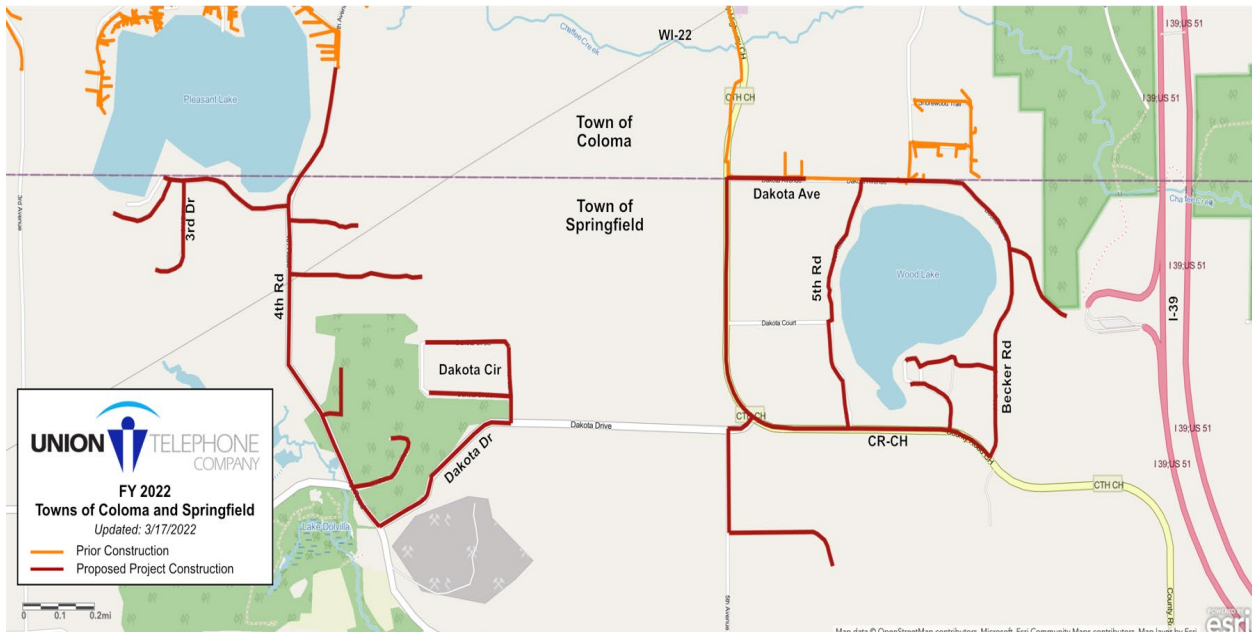
Print: JASON NOSKA

Date: 11/30/2020

By:

Print:

Date:



<b>Union Telephone 2022 Pleasant/Wood Lake</b>						
Unit	No of Units	Labor	Material	L&M	Extension	Section Totals
BD4	94	110.00	105.00	215.00	20,210.00	20,210.00
BDSH(576)	2	2,500.00	14,350.00	16,850.00	33,700.00	
BFO 24	22,600	2.65	0.50	3.15	71,190.00	
BFO 48	3,500	2.65	0.65	3.30	11,550.00	
BFO 96	34,100	2.65	1.00	3.65	124,465.00	
BFO V(2)	1,000	5.00	1.10	6.10	6,100.00	247,005.00
BHF (S)	20	100.00	110.00	210.00	4,200.00	
BHF (M)	82	325.00	320.00	645.00	52,890.00	
BHF (L)	5	400.00	380.00	780.00	3,900.00	60,990.00
BM 2(5/8)(8)	97	25.00	32.00	57.00	5,529.00	
BM 51 (4X50)	2	50.00	145.00	195.00	390.00	
BM 51 (6X50)	82	50.00	169.00	219.00	17,958.00	
BM 51 (LO)	4,200	2.65	0.00	2.65	11,130.00	
BM 53F	65	25.00	45.00	70.00	4,550.00	
BM 60 (1.25)DP	19,500	9.50	0.70	10.20	198,900.00	
BM 61D	1,000	9.50	0.70	10.20	10,200.00	
BM 71	500	18.00	0.00	18.00	9,000.00	
BM 72	500	12.00	6.00	18.00	9,000.00	266,657.00
HBFO (M)	81	210.00	525.00	735.00	59,535.00	
HBFO (L)	7	210.00	875.00	1,085.00	7,595.00	67,130.00
HO-1	3,000	38.00	1.00	39.00	117,000.00	117,000.00
WBD	4	100.00	15.00	115.00	460.00	
WBHF	4	125.00	35.00	160.00	640.00	
WHBFO	4	250.00	100.00	350.00	1,400.00	
WHO-1	24	75.00	1.00	76.00	1,824.00	4,324.00
<b>TOTAL</b>					<b>783,316.00</b>	<b>783,316.00</b>



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P. O. Box 7882 Madison, WI 53707-7882

March 16, 2022

Steffany Powell Coker

Secretary to the Commission

Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

North Tower, 6th Floor

Hill Farms State Office Building

4822 Madison Yards Way

Madison, Wisconsin 53705

RE: Support for the Union Telephone Company Broadband Grant Application for the Town of Springfield and Town of Coloma

Dear Ms. Powell Coker,

It is our pleasure to write in support of the Union Telephone Company Broadband Expansion Grant application.

As the state senator for the 14<sup>th</sup> Senate District and state representative for the 41<sup>st</sup> Assembly District, which includes the Town of Springfield, we fully understand the need for high-speed internet providers in rural, underserved communities. Internet access helps boost local economic development, allows students and families to study and work online, and creates a better technological landscape for telemedicine.

A well-facilitated broadband expansion in this area will help 265 homes and 4 businesses. Union Telephone Company has been serving the area for years. Their service reputation has always been excellent, and we are confident they will be a good provider. We support them in their plans to expand broadband access to this area and address the need for highspeed internet access in rural communities.

We ask that you seriously consider the application, which will bring great value to the 14<sup>th</sup> Senate District, 41<sup>st</sup> Assembly District, and Wisconsin.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have additional questions.

Sincerely,



Joan Ballweg

State Senator

14th Senate District



Alex Dallman

State Representative

41st Assembly District



**SCOTT KRUG**

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 72<sup>nd</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-0215  
FAX: (608) 282-3672  
District: (715) 459-2267  
Toll-Free: (888) 529-0072

P.O. Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708-8952  
Rep.Krug@legis.wi.gov

March 16, 2022

Jason Noska, Operations Manager

Union Telephone Company

Box 96

Plainfield WI 54966

Via email to [jnoska@uniontel.net](mailto:jnoska@uniontel.net)

Dear Mr. Noska:

I write today to commend Union Telephone Company for its plans to apply for a Broadband Expansion Grant from the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC) to expand service to part of the Town of Coloma in Waushara County, part of the Town of Springfield in Marquette County, and nearby areas.

I also wrote to express to the PSC my support for this important project and to indicate my interest in seeing this project funded with a grant by the PSC per your application.

The proposed project would bring a new fiber to the home network to residents in a part of my district (and nearby areas) that are underserved by current internet services. I don't have to state the importance of internet access, especially access to high-speed internet services, to residents and businesses everywhere. Such access is lacking in many rural areas. This project will help alleviate the situation.

I am informed by you that the PSC's current Broadband Map reflects inaccurate data when it shows most of the area in this project, as being served by other providers. You have assured me that the PSC acknowledges this inaccuracy. Further, you have shared with me that Union Telephone has surveyed residents and businesses in the area and received an overwhelming response stating the need for a fast/reliable broadband solution, which they are not in fact currently able to obtain at all.

I therefore urge the Wisconsin PSC to award this grant in support of your proposal, and to express my support for Union Telephone's funding application at this time. Thank you for your good work on this.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Krug", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Scott Krug

State Representative, 72<sup>nd</sup> District

March 17, 2022

Chairperson Rebecca Valcq  
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin  
4822 Madison Yards Way  
North Tower – 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Madison, WI 53705

Dear Chairperson Valcq,

I am writing to encourage you to support the broadband expansion grant proposal filed by Union Telephone Company that will benefit portions of Waushara and Marquette Counties.



Though these areas are considered served, independent surveys indicated that this data is inaccurate. Many residents and businesses say that they are not able to receive the services for which they are supposedly covered.

Internet is infrastructure, and modern American life makes being connected a virtual necessity. Ensuring that homes and businesses in Central Wisconsin have access to ample internet preserves equality of opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Testin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Patrick Testin  
WI State Senator,  
Senate District 24